

**Proceedings of the Visayas-Wide
Conference on Community-Based
Coastal Resources Management
and Fisheries Co-Management**

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Acknowledgment

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Foreword

For over a decade, community-based coastal resource management (CBCRM) and co-management have developed into widely adopted principles for the conservation, rehabilitation and sustainable management of coastal resources in the Philippines. In many parts of the country, numerous coastal resource management programs and projects using these approaches have been implemented by a variety of organizations. The ultimate objective of these programs and projects has been to improve, in a sustainable manner, the “well-being” of coastal ecosystems, both human and natural. A recent study on community-based coastal resource management programs and projects in the Philippines (Carlos and Pomeroy 1996) reveals that over 100 CBCRM and co-management programs and projects have been implemented in the country between 1984 and 1994, with over 40 percent of these located in the Visayas (incorporating administrative regions VI, VII and VIII). But still the process of change has not been easy, and success is not guaranteed. There remains much to be learned in order to improve the current methods and processes of CBCRM and co-management to increase the rate of successful implementation.

Undoubtedly, the time, funds and collective efforts put into these programs and projects have allowed implementors and participants to accumulate valuable knowledge and experience in the area of CBCRM and co-management. This knowledge and experience is an important source of information that can be used to improve the design and implementation of CBCRM and co-management initiatives in the Visayas region and elsewhere. Thus, there is a need to promote dialogue and sharing among CBCRM and co-management advocates, practitioners, policy-makers, researchers, coastal residents and other stakeholders. There is also a need to let people in other countries become familiar with the methods and approaches of CBCRM and co-management being used in the Philippines, so as to assist them in achieving sustainability in their own coastal ecosystems.

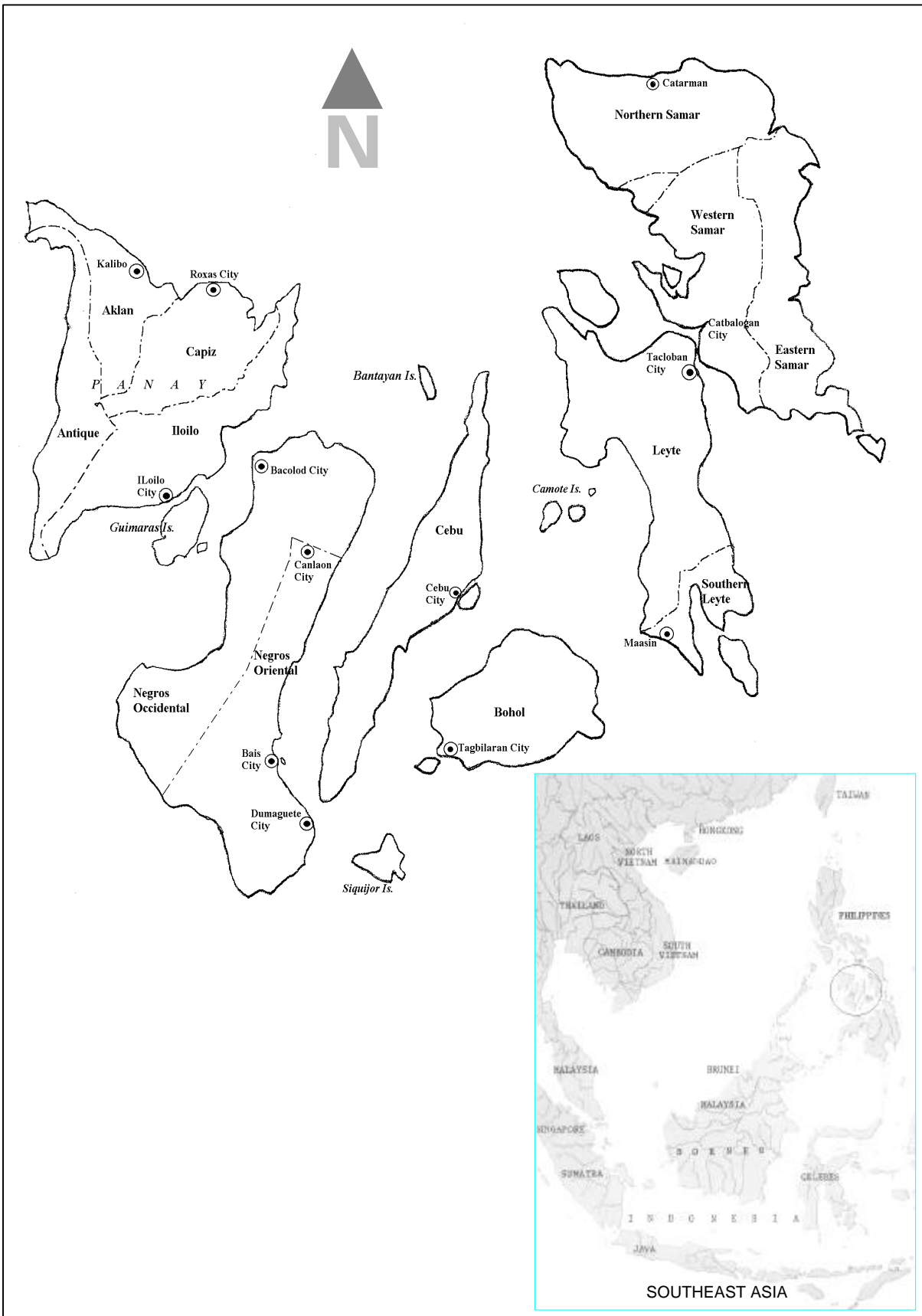
With the above rationale in mind, the International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM), Tambuyog Development Center (TDC) and the World Resources Institute (WRI) organized and funded a Visayas-wide conference and workshop on community-based coastal resource management and co-management from 4-7 July 1995 in Cebu City, Cebu. The objectives of the conference were:

1. to provide a venue for sharing CBCRM and co-management methods and experiences among advocates, practitioners, policy-makers, coastal residents and other stakeholders and researchers; and
2. to document methods, strategies, processes, achievements and problems in designing and implementing CBCRM and co-management in Regions VI, VII and VIII.

Over 130 people representing non-governmental organizations, people’s organizations, government agencies, international donors, academic research institutions, as well as international and regional research institutions participated in the conference. Papers were presented, testimonials offered, small group discussions held, and workshop sessions on various themes including organizing and training, research, resource rehabilitation and protection, women, and partnerships were organized during the four-day event.

In this proceedings, it was originally planned to group the papers under five workshop themes, but there were some difficulties in getting complete, revised papers from all of the authors. Instead, the proceedings contains edited versions of most of the papers delivered during the conference, supplemented by some testimonials and discussion points drawn from recorded transcripts of the workshop sessions. We hope it provides an overview of the methods, approaches, issues and opportunities for and serves to stimulate discussion, learning and successful implementation of CBCRM and co-management in the Visayas region.

Figure 1. Map of the Visayas.



Welcome and Opening Remarks

Hon. Rhet Pelaez
Office of the President
Visayas

First of all, allow me to express my heartfelt gratitude for having been invited to this Visayas-wide conference on community-based resource management and fisheries co-management. I welcome all of you today to Cebu.

When I received the invitation from ICLARM, my thoughts associated this word to “alarm”: ICLARM, ALARM. Truth of the matter is, there is really an alarm on the way that we have been handling our coastal resources over the last 20 or 30 years. In part this alarm has been raised by the Central Visayas Regional Project (CVRP), which has been working to protect our regional environment both nearshore and offshore. In recent days I have learned about areas in Western Samar and the island of Siquijor, where CVRP’s efforts together with some NGOs and LGUs have yielded some impressive results.

A while ago, we hosted Mr. Russell Cheatham, Vice President of the World Bank, on a visit to Bohol and Leyte. Though you would suppose Mr. Cheatham is accustomed to his very well equipped and luxuriously styled office at the World Bank headquarters, I saw something soft in his heart: his concern for rural development, along with a specific interest in our coastal resources. As we visited an island off Talibon, Bohol, he saw how we made a remarkable difference in the way of life of our people. The Visayas region is an archipelago, a feature that differentiates it from Luzon and Mindanao, both contiguous territories. Because of its nature, the Visayas is a haven for coastal resources, and along with this is the special need for coastal resources management. Yet I feel that we have had some successes. No less than the World Bank Vice-President suggested that we come up with a video presentation showing how the people on this island have made a remarkable difference and turned it into one of the largest mangrove plantations in this part of the world.

In Tacloban yesterday, in celebration of People’s Day—the very first day of the new provincial government’s administration—there were several exhibits. I noted that if we look at growth in terms of the regional economies, it may be in this subsector of aquatic resources where the Visayas has been strongest compared to some other subsectors. For this reason, I am pleased to speak to you on concerns in the national government about the way our aquatic resources should be managed. This workshop is indeed timely. I shall ask the organizers to keep me abreast of the conference outputs, because we have seen in the past a lot of similar gatherings, yet what comes of the four days of meetings? I have seen in the past a lot of beautiful plans, a lot of beautiful programs, but we have remained that way for the past twenty years. I would like to see the more important aspect: implementation of the recommendations produced by a conference such as this.

I think the challenge of our time, in terms of development, is being able to improve livelihood. Let us see how we can help by making sure that conference outputs really get implemented. I was particularly interested in this study conducted by Carlos and Pomeroy which reveals that at least 100 CBCRM co-management projects have been implemented in the twelve regions of the country, of which 40% are in the Visayas. I ask that these be identified so that we can properly synchronize our plans and, more importantly, the implementation of these plans in order to assure the sustainability of the projects. So ladies and gentlemen, may I thank all the organizers for deciding to hold this workshop on one of the priority areas identified by the Office of the President-Visayas.

Mr. Romeo Escandor

*Vice Chairman, Regional Development Council, Region VII
Director, National Economic and Development Authority, Region VII*

Let me welcome you on behalf of the Regional Development Council of the Central Visayas. I am here in my capacity as vice chairman of the Regional Development Council-VII and also because the co-sponsor of this workshop, the Resource Management Center, is an office under the Regional Development Council.

The RDC of Region VII is implementing several big projects. One was the Central Visayas Regional Project (CVRP-I), funded by the World Bank. We are currently into project preparation of CVRP-Phase II. Coastal resource management is one of the major components of CVRP-II.

We believe that coastal management is part of the total resource management package, especially if we look at watershed development in totality. We hope that you will have a fruitful workshop resulting in some agreements that will not end up only as documents on our shelves, but rather come up with plans that will be implemented in the coming years.

Dr. Charles Barber

*Senior Research Associate
World Resources Institute*

Thank you very much and good morning. On behalf of the World Resources Institute, I welcome all of you here. I am very pleased to see such a large and diverse group of people. The WRI is a policy research institute on development and environment issues. We're based in the United States but work internationally as well by trying to influence policies and mutually-built capacities to promote sustainable development policies in a range of areas: natural resources, energy, pollution, as well as environmental information systems and environmental economics. WRI is co-sponsoring this meeting with our colleagues from ICLARM and TDC in an attempt to bring together some of the wealth of information and experience you have here in the Philippines in CBCRM and co-management. We hope to make this available to others, and to provide compelling arguments to governments, donor organizations, and the private sector as to why this is the direction in which we all must move, both here and in other countries, if we want to maintain our coastal fisheries resources and manage them in a sustainable and equitable way.

I would like to highlight the three pillars of WRI's philosophy. One is recognizing the crucial importance of conserving the environment and our natural resources; second is the need for a sustainable economic development. But across both of those is the need to promote and take affirmative steps toward greater social equity and equality. I think all three of these elements are necessary as a foundation in any system for managing resources and promoting development, and this is surely true when we look at the coastal zone.

There are a number of linkages that WRI emphasizes in its work. One is the linkage between research and action. For me, action on the ground is the only legitimate end goal for research. The need for dialogue among all of the different sectors involved in the management of natural resources is particularly important in the coastal zone because there we have an interface between land and water. A variety of different sectors and institutions all come together in coastal zones. We need to build the capacity of organizations, especially at the community level, to manage their own affairs and to empower local communities and those who work with them to rally and take the lead in managing their resources and improving their livelihoods.

Another is the linkage between action at the local level and what happens at the provincial and national levels in terms of government policies and action, as well as what happens in the international scene. In this world today, no community can function entirely outside of the influence

of international cultural, economic, and political forces. It is important to be always thinking of how we can act at all levels of social, economic and political organization to try and make positive changes.

There is furthermore a need to blend the number of disciplines. Fisheries management is not just about of fish. It's about people, it's about institutions, it's about power, it's about money, it's about culture. We must keep in mind the need to bring to bear all of those disciplines in analyzing the many aspects of problems that we confront. Perhaps most important, because it is often overlooked, is the need to recognize the value of local knowledge of those who directly manage fisheries and other coastal resources. This is not news to most of you but I think if you look at the way most of the policies for environmental management, fisheries management, and the like have been designed and implemented, respecting and using local knowledge has not been very high on the agenda. We would like to change that.

Finally, there is the need for strong linkages between all sectors of society. It is not possible for either communities on the one hand or government on the other hand to manage fisheries and coastal resources alone. Both must be involved. As all of us are aware there's a wealth of organizations formed by those who actually use resources, NGOs, the scientific community, and I think also—it has not been talked about much yet but I'm sure will be—the private sector, which is often a large part of the problem. But we must find ways to make it a part of the solutions to our problems. It seems to me that this meeting encompasses all of those kinds of linkages, and this is what we are striving for in all of our work in the WRI.

Our hopes for this meeting are threefold: one is to have an open, frank and informative exchange of our experiences and information so that we can all work in the future enriched by each other's experiences. Second is to build new and stronger working relationships among organizations as we move forward on these issues, as well as new personal friendships, which are always the basis of strong organizational relationships. I hope we can generate new knowledge through our interactions and then spread it beyond this meeting, beyond this region of the country, and beyond the Philippines in order to help people in other countries who look to the Philippines as a place where there has been a lot of progress in this area and from which they can learn. I hope we have a very productive and successful conference.

Dr. Robert S. Pomeroy

Senior Research Scientist on Fisheries Economics

International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM)

Project Leader, Fisheries Co-Management Project, ICLARM

We welcome all of you here and we thank you for participating with us for the next four days. This workshop is a joint activity between ICLARM, Tambuyog Development Center, and the World Resources Institute. It's something that we thought about six or seven months ago, and is an activity to begin to bring together experiences and knowledge on community based management in the Philippines. I want to just briefly give you an idea of ICLARM's particular involvement in this project.

Many of you might not be aware that ICLARM, the International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management, has been in the Philippines since 1976. It's an international fisheries research center with projects not only in Asia but in the South Pacific and Africa as well. One of the projects we have, of which I am the project leader, is called the fisheries co-management project. It started in May of 1994, and is a five-year project funded by the Danish government, conducted jointly by ICLARM and the North Sea Centre in Denmark, along with various partners in several Asian and African countries.

The reason for this project was that in June 1993 we had an international workshop at IIRR in Cavite to talk about community management and common property of coastal fisheries. Many conclusions from that workshop indicated that the traditional community-based management systems have important roles to play in the management of coastal fisheries. Secondly, recent research on community-based fisheries management systems have shown that when left to their own devices, communities of fishers, under certain conditions, may use fisheries resources sustainably. To many of you that sounds like something you take for granted, but for the international community who have been working in fisheries and dealing with centralized fisheries management, many people are just becoming aware that local fishers can manage their fisheries sustainably under certain conditions.

The third general conclusion was that a new philosophy of fisheries management is needed in which the fisher can once again become part of the resource management team, balancing rights and responsibilities and working in a co-operative rather than antagonistic mode with government fisheries managers—basically saying that the fishers should become an integral part of how we do fisheries management. Finally, co-management is a rational extension of the evolutionary trends in fisheries management over the past decade. What we saw over one hundred years ago was that fishermen were the ones doing fisheries management. As fisheries management became more centralized, the government took over the responsibility, and the fishermen became a lesser part of the fisheries management process. Now we are seeing the trend coming back with fishermen again becoming a part of the process.

Many of you may not know that the Philippines is a leading country in the world in community-based management. One of the reasons for having this workshop is to try to learn and provide the information known within the country to help people establish projects in other countries. We're working in Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia, and many other countries. They are looking towards the Philippines for instruction and information and to help them improve the way fisheries management is done. How do we define fisheries co-management? Most fisheries management has been done by the central government. There have been informal and traditional types of community-based management activities undertaken, but most of these systems were not recognized by the central government. What we call co-management is really just a recognition that the national government and the local community can work together to manage the fisheries. There are certain functions of the national government that are critical for fisheries management, but the local community itself plays an essential role as well. There is a whole range of types of fisheries management: at one end, the centralized management model where the government has all responsibility for how fisheries management is done—usually from Manila or from a central national agency; in the other extreme, the community has self governance and full responsibility for undertaking fisheries management. One of the things we have realized is that neither one of these extremes actually exists. While we have community-based management, no community really has full authority and full responsibility for how they do fisheries management because at some level you have to interact with the government. So we have what we call intermediate areas co-management in which the community takes over some responsibilities from the government. ICLARM's project aims to gain practical experience in the co-management of fisheries to demonstrate its application as a sustainable, equitable, and efficient management strategy and to develop models of use for adoption by the government, communities, NGOs, and others.

The project is really to develop new ideas, experiences and models which governments, NGOs, fishing communities and others can use to implement a new type of fisheries management. We are working in a number of resource systems, not just coastal resource systems but lakes, rivers and coral reefs. We're also working in several regions and countries around the world. In Asia, this includes the Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand. In Africa: Zimbabwe, Malawi, and a couple of countries in West Africa. So our project is really trying to gather a world-wide perspective.

Many of you may not be aware that, for example, in Thailand the government is starting what they call a fishing rights program, where they're setting up four pilot sites in the country to try

community-based management. In Vietnam, the government is doing the same thing. They're setting up three different sites to try community-based management. In Indonesia, the people have a tradition of community-based management, but the government hasn't recognized this yet. So your neighbors within Asia are all trying to develop community-based management systems, and they're looking to the Philippines for experience. From a workshop paper a couple of weeks ago I learned that the Philippines has had experience in community-based management for over thirty years. It basically started out in irrigation; the National Irrigation Authority was really the first community-based management effort in the country. Then, as experience was gained there, it transferred to the upland areas and to social forestry programs and from there into health programs and finally, in the last five to ten years, into the fisheries areas. So that's a lot of experience both within the country and among different resource systems in the Philippines that people can build on.

Fisheries co-management probably won't work everywhere, but we hope to find out where fisheries co-management can work, and how we can make it work more effectively. In our particular project, we're pursuing this goal through three different research activities.

The first is a comparative case study of fisheries co-management strategies looking at past experiences of fisheries co-management through existing literature, country research, and networking. Our country research involves two parts: working at the national level to look at legal, institutional and administrative conditions, and at the community level to evaluate the impacts of co-management. Most of you working at the local level realize that the Local Government Code was implemented a couple of years ago. We're working with the University of the Philippines College of Public Administration to evaluate the Local Government Code and other fisheries and natural resources policies to see how community-based management projects are implemented in the Philippines.

The second activity is at the community or fisherfolk organization level to extract information about informal traditional management strategies. One of the things that Melvin Carlos has done, and I'm hoping that we can pass it out to you, is an evaluation of the last ten years of fisheries co-management projects. One of the things that we have found was that there are over 100 CBCRM programs and projects in fisheries within the Philippines just in the last ten years, and that includes everything from the CVRP to many smaller projects around the country.

This workshop will fit into a larger, world-wide output. The issues that we're going to talk about here, the outputs that are going to be produced in this workshop, are very important in what's being done around the world, and we hope that the information will be transferred out to the local communities, to the other regions, to the national and to the world-wide audience who are looking to the Philippines for leadership in community-based management. I look forward to meeting and talking to all of you. Thank you.

Ms. Linea Tanchuling
Program Development Officer
Tambuyog Development Center

The Tambuyog Development Center is based in Manila, and we have two main institutional thrusts: one, working with communities to implement community-based coastal resource management, and two: advocating the praxis of CBCRM and co-management to policy-makers and other groups or institutions throughout the country.

For our direct community work, we have areas in Cebu, Sorsogon, and Palawan. Our activities include research, training and education, communication, publications and direct community organization. In the process of working with the communities and in partnership with the people's organizations and other institutions, we have learned so many things about resource

management approaches, tools, and methodologies. But most of all we have learned how it is to work and learn with people.

We believe that there is still so much to learn, which is what drew us to this place in uptown Cebu. We come from different places, different islands. We carry with us different backgrounds: fishers, academicians, researchers, development workers, and in fact we speak different languages and dialects, but what has drawn us here together is that willingness to learn and our commitment to protect our environment and our lives through empowerment and participatory strategies. We come here together to strengthen that commitment even more.

We hope that in the four days that we are gathered, we will learn a lot and that the sharing of experiences as well as ideas will be worthwhile. I also hope that we can hear the voices of our fisherfolks since they play a very significant role in CBCRM and co-management. On behalf of TDC, good morning to everyone.

Keynote Address

Dr. Francisco Felizar, Jr.
Undersecretary
Department of Science and Technology
Government of the Philippines

It is an honor to be invited to give the keynote address this morning even if I came not as an official of the government and I had to seek permission from the Secretary to come over. I came here as a learner, as a participant; I came here as an observer, and I came here to listen to you. But a bit of background about this, why I am interested in looking at co-management and community-based resource management. Way back in 1993, I had the opportunity to work with CIDA, the Canadian International Development Agency, and I undertook a project on community-based resource management. I tried to edit two series of books on community-based resource management, and I hope in this forum that I can validate some assumptions in the things I wrote together with other authors in that particular book. It's been customary for me to come to a conference with a prepared speech, but this morning I won't be doing that, because I would like to simply talk out of my experience and out of observations and out of the discouragement and encouragement I've had serving in the government.

We have a lot of initiatives at the national level. In fact, just last week, the President said: "it is now, it is us." I would like to reiterate the same message to you: "It is now, it is us." We have to empower ourselves, take the initiatives now because tomorrow might never come. Now, because we are racing against time. We have to make up for lost time. It has been encouraging to hear people—especially our friends from foreign countries—come and say they would like to learn from us. We are happy about that, but the reality is, even as they learn from us, they still do things better than we do. I was a university professor for 20 years before being invited by the government to join the Ramos Administration. The programs from 20 years ago are the same programs being talked about now; the problems we talked about 20 years ago are the same problems we face today. Top administrations come and go, but the people at the local level remain. The problem remains; the resources remain. But they are not remaining healthy and integrated; rather, they are degraded, and the people are poorer and worse off than before.

That's why this gathering is very important, especially because the Philippines is an archipelagic country. The last frontier we have is our marine environment. Our coastal resources are a cauldron of problems, opportunities and conflict. We have to solve these problems together. When I said we are racing against time, it's very serious. Look around us, we don't have much left for the future of this country. To us is given the responsibility to manage these resources. I'm very glad that today we have come together to prove equal to the task of conserving and managing our coastal resources.

In the national arena, we have the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development, now in the process of drafting what we call the Philippine Agenda 21. I know all this because I'm the chairman of the committee on the means for implementation, and chairman of the sub-committee on science and technology. A Human Ecological Security Conference called by the Department of Local and Interior Government for the President elaborated that there should be a balance between population and peace. We have the social reform agenda, the Council for Countryside Development, the presidential assistance for the alleviation of poverty. What I'm trying to say is that we have a lot of programs but we are groping as to how to integrate them with each other. For one, we are serving a common client: the Filipino people. There are many initiatives, many resources, many efforts being put into this, and yet we are still hoping that some time in the future, we can achieve success.

Therefore, my proposition is this: amidst all these national initiatives and efforts, there is at this point only one viable strategy for achieving sustainable development: community-based resource co-management, because co-management is about people and their capability; co-management is about the resources and how to use them wisely, how to conserve them. It is about institutions, policies and laws that would enable us to turn our resources into livelihood and income for the community. And therefore, community-based resource co-management provides the option by which we can integrate all our efforts. It is where we can operationalize the goals of sustainable development and the goals of the government, economic competitiveness, and people empowerment. It is where we can see that the resources are protected, enhanced and managed properly.

It's customary for me to open my Bible before going on a trip. This morning I was amazed at the words that came up to me. One of the verses that I read was this: "Knowledge is power and he who has knowledge increases in strength." Our gathering together is sharing of knowledge with each other so that we can be strengthened, we can be inspired, and we can have power that comes from knowledge and information.

Right now, I can see that we have the power to change, the power to manage our resources and to make a difference. I was also encouraged by another verse which says, "In the abundance of advisers, you can wage your war..." This is it. In this particular workshop, all of us are advisers. And if we put our knowledge and experiences together, we wield potentially tremendous power.

The problem, however, is a commitment to what we're doing. I said earlier people learn from us yet continue to do better than we do. We have made a contribution, but I would like to see us outdo ourselves, do things excellently, and strive to perfect our own experiences. We have to have that attitude of creativity. We don't do these things because we have received an honorarium, or because we have grants and funding from foreign organizations, but because we are committed to it.

At this point, I would like to note that community-based resource management has been with us for centuries. If you look at the Banawe Rice Terraces, that is community-based resource management in action. If you look back at history, to the traditional barangay leadership before the Spaniards arrived, we were doing community-based resource management. There was sharing of resources, joint accountability and a lot of common visioning. It's in our culture, so I believe community-based resource management is viable. The forces of history destroyed that culture, but now we're trying to recapture the beauty of community-based resource management and clothe it in a different language, put it in a different package. Call it CBRM or call it co-management, but *bayanihan* is there, it has been there and will be there. Self help has been there and will continue to be there. So I don't believe we will fail in our endeavor.

By this time you are tired of listening to me. Let me congratulate the organizers. I shall be spending my time with you here as a student, as a learner, and as a friend who can be an ally in the national government. Thank you very much.